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Recommended Citation

Editors, Wooster Voice, "The Wooster Voice (Wooster, OH), 1962-03-12" (1962). *The Voice: 1961-1970*. 31.
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WOOSTER HONOR SYSTEM VOTE TODAY; VOICE URGES CASTING OF YES BALLOTS

System Not Designed To Stop Cheating; Aim Is To Create Responsible Attitude

by Steve Geckeler

Let it be stated clearly — AN HONOR SYSTEM IS NOT GEARED TO STOP CHEATING. In any group there are inveterate cheaters, those who see nothing wrong with cheating and practice their art profusely. No police force can prevent their antics.

However, I would suggest that Wooster does not house a large number of such citizens.

More important than stopping cheating, the Honor System hopes to establish an esprit des corps, an attitude on campus which will in itself discourage cheating among those who may be tempted to cheat in certain situations.

Most important it rests the responsibility for test situations where it should be, on the students' honor.

For or Against

Margaret Kehe in the Feb. 27 *Voice*, citing an argument against the Honor System, stated, "Honesty is a character trait, not adherence to a rule." This is an argument for the Honor Code.

The point is that there is a basic attitude, not just of the individual but of his society also, which helps form this character trait. Honor is an attitude like love, respect and charity. Man is not born with these virtues.

Rather they are formed and developed by his parents, teachers, religion, and his own acceptance. This honor must be reaffirmed constantly in every situation to become a character trait.

Assuming there will be acceptance of honor ourselves in every situation assures us only of ourselves. It does not, and this is important, regulate or encourage honor from those who might not have accepted honor as thoroughly as we.

Whose Business?

Too many students say "what business of ours is another's private morality?"—or should we say "Immorality." We laugh it off when someone is caught cheating.

College rules and proctors tend to become separate forces with police powers—they on one side, we on the other. Their responsibility is to catch cheaters, while we too often say merely, "Too bad you got caught."

This unhealthy attitude must be remedied. The difference between being watched and being trusted is the difference between getting away with something and deceiving ourselves. We suffer when we deceive ourselves.

Others suffer when we ignore that, proctor or no proctor, we have a responsibility to uphold honor in our attitudes as well as our actions.

Code an Affirmation

The signing of an honor code does not "shackle our consciences," but affirms our acceptance of responsibility to uphold the attitude and value of honor. No longer can we lean on proctors as crutches.

We must assume honor for ourselves as well as let others know honor is a "character trait" all should assume. This is not self-righteousness. I term it demonstrating through witness the importance of honor.

An honor system "will not insure that individuals will take responsibility." Democracy too rests

on individual maturity. Not all men assume it.

Yet when a challenge presents itself, a democracy must be ready to assume its responsibility. This attitude is necessary for its preservation and progress.

Healthy Attitude

Our assumption of responsibility for honor is necessary for a more healthy campus attitude. Acceptance of the Honor System will not mystically change present attitudes.

No method of education will insure the acceptance of virtue. This does not negate the need to try.

This also does not negate that Honor Systems have instilled healthier attitudes among the majority of students in the majority of schools where the system has been incorporated.

Wooster owes it to herself to give the system a try. Pre-judgment is impossible. There is no substitute for conscientious and sincere effort on the part of every student to make it work.

It is the student's decision now whether they wish to advance this effort and meet the need.

Voice Votes "Yes"

In today's voting on the Honor System students will not be able to register the degree of their support or lack of support. They will only be able to vote yes or no. The primary task then is to weigh carefully the entire baskets of pro and con arguments and vote according to conscience.

We strongly urge students to vote yes if they have an interest in any honor system at all. Contrary to widespread belief, the proposal is not in a final form and is somewhat amendable. To be sure, this flexibility applies only to minor changes and not to the spirit of the code, but many of the criticisms currently circulating such as the lack of machinery for amendment itself or the concept of double jeopardy can be reconciled.

Rather we see the vote today as choice between accepting a program which would publicly acknowledge the principles of honesty and responsibility or announcing that despite all the petitions for more freedom, the students are unwilling to accept the chore of enforcing their codes.

We see the vote today as an opportunity to put social power behind the concept of ethical conduct and end the easy abdication of responsibility manifested in the query, "What is it to me?"

We also see the vote today as a possible beginning for a wider extension of student prerogatives into the area of social conduct. A defeat at this point would darken the outlook for a long time to come. Those who argue to the contrary, or that this is not a relevant point, are terribly naïve.

Thus the vote today will decide one of the most important questions ever to face a society—namely its ability to act as a society.

Wellesly, Rice, Scripps Letters Endorse Their Honor Codes

The *Voice* is indebted to Paul Bergstresser and Ann Zimmermann for the following excerpts from letters they received from friends in response to a privately sponsored questionnaire they sent out on the Honor System. These excerpts are from students at schools which have Honor Systems and give some ideas concerning those systems and their effectiveness.

WELLESLY: "... Quizzes and hourlies are based (on) an honor system. The teacher generally leaves the class alone, and I have never know any cheating to take place. (Is the honor system effective?) Very much.

Integrity Assumed

"The integrity of every person is assumed, and there is a great feeling of individual responsibility for one's self and (for) the community ...

"... in general there is a great deal of respect for other people and for the rules of the college. Personal standards are very high, and for this reason the honor system is able to work. And the honor system itself helps keep one conscious of the necessity of integrity and of responsibility toward others."

RICE: "I believe that the honor system and especially the honor spirit is most effective. It is the one aspect of my academic life that I value the most. There have been so few violations of the honor system per year that they could be numbered on one hand for violations during the past four years ...

Approval and Respect

"I am enclosing some of the Honor Council's material which is sent to all freshmen upon entering Rice ... However, it can never express, I believe, the unanimous approval and respect that most of us here at Rice have for the Honor System.

"Neither can it describe the relaxed atmosphere of un-proctored exams and the feeling of self-respect that comes from knowing that you are being trusted to uphold the system ... The important thing about the Honor System is the principle behind it which governs all things in our college life.

"... I was just discussing with my roommate what to tell you about the system, and in our discussions before, she has said that although she would be very hurt to have to do so, she would report me if she saw me violating the Honor System, and I would feel the same way."

SCRIPPS: "... Yes, we do

and always have had an honor system. It applies to everything from daily assignments to finals to all social activities. It is for the most part very effective and the few girls who disobey serve as a further reason for us to uphold the system.

"Let me explain further. The honor code is based on personal responsibility ... Unfortunately, there are those who do not comply with the system, and a judiciary board is necessary.

Teach Self-Honesty

"... once you adopt the honor system here at school, it becomes a part of your actions for the rest of your life. I think the biggest asset of the system is to teach each of us self-honesty ...

"As far as exams are concerned, I'm sitting here staring at an un-opened physics exam that I have to take between now and Wednesday, and I'm on my honor not to open it before I begin my three hours that are allotted, and I'm also on my honor not to discuss any aspect of the test with anyone other than the professor if I get stuck.

"We take all our final exams within a certain radius depending on the teacher. They usually don't want us to take them back to our rooms, because it wastes time ... I wrote my humanities final in a room with two other girls and no faculty present, but none of us would have thought of asking another girl anything but spelling or punctuation, simply because it isn't right.

Develops Pride

"I think you develop a pride in knowing that an exam is all up to you, and you wouldn't dream of having anyone else helping. It is a good attitude as a boost to studying too, because you know that when the test comes, no one will be willing to fill in the parts you didn't study ...

"I think the best part of the system is the trust that is established between the students and between the students and the faculty. It is a good feeling to know that everyone taking an exam is doing their best with no other help, and that all of us have a self-respect and pride and realize that this respect and pride is in our fellow students."

Hoak Presents Code Rewording; Clarifies Article Four, Adds Fifth

Academic Board Chairman Dale Hoak announced Friday three areas in which the proposed Honor Code was reworded for purposes of clarification. They are as follows:

Article IV, Section b.

The Academic Board shall meet separately within five to seven days of the reported violation to judge the case. Conviction shall require a four-fifths vote. Conviction and penalty in the form of a recommendation shall be given to the Deans and the President for final action.

Article IV, Section c.

No person acquitted of the charge of violating the Code shall

be retried for the same offense. A person convicted of violation of the Code may be retried for the same offense in the event that new evidence significantly affecting the outcome of the case be discovered.

Article V. Amendment Procedure.

Section 1. Amendment of the Constitution of the Honor Code shall follow the same process as that for amendment of the Constitution of the Student Senate.



SPECIAL EDITION

Election Instructions
Polling Times—5-6 p.m.
and 7-11 p.m.

Voting Areas—Every floor of every dormitory and in each of the Sections.
Off-Campus men listen for announcement.

Wooster Voice

Published weekly by the students of the College of Wooster during the school year. Opinions expressed in editorials and features are those of the students and should not be construed as representing administration policy.

Member of the Associated Collegiate Press, Intercollegiate Press and the Ohio College Newspaper Association. Entered as second class matter in the Post Office, Wooster, Ohio.

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